

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Avian Influenza Monitored Flock Program

Program Overview
2012

Introduction:

The Pennsylvania Avian Influenza Monitored Flock Program is a voluntary monthly testing program designed to provide an early warning of AI in Pennsylvania poultry and to allow producers to meet requirements for movement of poultry for exhibits and live bird markets.

This program involves participation and cooperation by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and Pennsylvania's poultry flock producers.

Program Overview:

A. Flock Owner Responsibilities:

1. **Collection and submission of diagnostic samples:**
 - a. Samples shall be collected by a certified poultry technician or an accredited veterinarian.
 - b. Samples shall be collected from 30 birds **representative of the flock** (birds of testing age tested from all pens and houses on the premises) and tested at a Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System (PADLS) laboratory every 21-30 days.
 - c. Samples shall be collected, transported to the laboratory, and tested at the flock owner's expense.
2. **Reporting of possible disease:**

Flock owners shall immediately report any evidence or suspicion of avian influenza to the Department, and shall submit any samples requested for testing.
3. **Records:**

Flock owners shall maintain records pertaining to the flock to include sources of birds, dates of additions to the flock, dates and results of testing, and other records that may be necessary to monitor compliance with this program, and shall make these records available for review by the Department.
4. **Compliance with regulations:**
 - a. **Marketing and transport:**

Flock owners shall market and transport live poultry in accordance with program requirements and utilize only marketing agents and transportation agents who are licensed or otherwise approved by the Department in accordance with the Domestic Animal Act (Act 100).

b. **Import/movement regulations:**

Flock owners shall comply with all Department poultry health regulations regarding import and movement of poultry as stated in Title 7 of the PA Code.

5. **Biosecurity:**

Flock owners shall adopt and implement the minimum biosecurity measures included in the appendix of this document for their flocks, and shall allow periodic inspection by the Department to evaluate flock and premises biosecurity.

B. Department Responsibilities:

1. **Records:**

The Department will:

- a. Monitor testing and maintain records necessary to administer the program; and
- b. Provide certification that a flock has met program guidelines and is a Pennsylvania AI Monitored Flock.

2. **Information:**

The Department will, in cooperation with Penn State University and the University of Pennsylvania, provide technical information and advice to flock owners, veterinarians, and certified poultry technicians regarding the prevention and control of avian influenza.

C. Program Requirements:

1. To be certified as a Pennsylvania AI Monitored Flock, a flock must meet the following requirements:
 - a. The flock is in compliance with the requirements set forth elsewhere in this document.
 - b. The flock is tested for avian influenza as follows:
 - i. Samples from 30 birds, three weeks of age and older **from all pens and houses** on the premises shall be collected between 21 and 30 days after the previous collection.
 - ii. Flocks must be tested every month-not just the month that they are moving.
 - iii. It is recommended that all waterfowl be swabbed (cloacal swabs) and tested using virus isolation (although blood testing is acceptable to meet program standards). It is preferred that other

birds, such as chickens, have blood samples submitted for testing. (Tracheal swabs will be accepted for other birds, but the testing fees for tracheal swabs are higher than for blood testing.) In 2012, PCR testing is available for domestic ducks only-more information is available from the PADLS laboratories. Check with PADLS for current fee schedules.

- c. The first test needs to be conducted within 30 days of placement except for the following:
 - i. Blood collection of silkies and other small breeds of chickens may be delayed until the birds are 6-8 weeks of age;
 - ii. Blood collection of guineas, chukars, and quail may be delayed until the birds are 5-6 weeks of age.
 - iii. Eggs may be substituted for quail and chukars after they start laying.
2. For entry into the NY LBMS, blood testing will not be accepted for waterfowl; cloacal swabs must be submitted for virus isolation testing. In 2012, PCR testing will be accepted for domestic ducks only.
3. The 30 birds selected for testing shall be selected randomly and shall be representative of the flock (birds of testing age tested from all pens and houses on the premises).
4. The sample collector is expected to conduct a flock inspection at the time of sample collection to assess the general health of the flock.
5. To qualify as a flock the group must have been together without any additions from untested or unmonitored flocks for a minimum of 21 days prior to testing and no additional birds may be added between the testing date and the date that they leave the farm.
6. The samples shall be submitted to a PADLS laboratory for testing.
7. The flock owner shall notify the Department if 30 eligible birds are not available for testing within every 30 days.
8. A flock must be negative for AI on testing for 3 consecutive months before it is considered to be a monitored flock in good standing. *When new birds are added to the premises, birds coming from a source which is of equal or higher status (for example, another monitored flock) assume the monitored flock status of the previous flock and must be tested once as a monitored flock prior to moving into the LBMS. Chicks coming directly from an NPIP AI Clean hatchery must be tested once as a monitored flock before moving into the LBMS. If the added birds are from other sources, the flock must be tested for 3 months consecutively (with negative results) to be a monitored flock in good standing.*
9. If a monthly test is missed on a flock, the flock must be tested within 10 days of movement into the NY or NJ LBMS.

D. Termination:

1. Flock owners may terminate participation in this program at any time.
2. The Department may remove a flock from the program on the basis of non-compliance with program requirements.

3. The terminating party will notify the other party of the termination as soon as possible.
4. The Department may terminate the AI Monitored Flock Program at any time, without advance notice to the participating flock owners. If the Department terminates this program, it will provide notice to the participating flock owners as soon as possible.
5. Failure to provide notice of termination described in this paragraph shall not affect termination.

E. It should be further understood that:

1. The accredited veterinarian or certified poultry technician who collects samples may negotiate fees with the flock owner for professional services required by this program.
2. No liability shall accrue to the Department for damages, losses, or injuries incidental to or arising by virtue of participation in this program.
3. Certification as an AI Monitored Flock does not constitute a warranty regarding the presence or absence of AI.

APPENDIX

Biosecurity Guidelines for Participating Flocks

Disease agents such as bacteria and viruses are easily introduced onto a farm by people, vehicles, farm equipment, and animals, including the poultry coming into the operation. Organic material, including manure, feathers, and dust, are the primary means by which the disease agents can be carried.

Listed below are several practical measures which can be taken to reduce the risk of bringing disease agents onto a farm. These are minimal biosecurity recommendations and should be used only as guidelines for development of complete biosecurity practices on an individual farm.

- Avoid visiting farms with poor biosecurity practices.
- When visiting other farms or auctions with poultry, wear disposable outerwear and dispose of it, or change your clothes and clean your boots before returning to your own property.
- Limit visitors and reduce vehicular traffic on your property, and keep any visitors away from the poultry.
- Keep your poultry house locked. Allow only essential personnel into your poultry house. Provide clean or disposable coveralls, head covers, and plastic boots or boots that can be cleaned and disinfected for personnel who must enter the house.
- Personnel should change outerwear between poultry houses.
- Disinfecting foot baths are useful and should be placed at outside entries to the poultry house and egg room. Change the disinfectant in the foot baths daily.
- Do not share equipment or vehicles with other farms. If you must, insist that vehicles and equipment entering your premises be cleaned and disinfected. (Personnel and equipment that have been in direct or indirect contact with the live bird markets pose a great risk).
- Trucks from the Live Bird Market should not be going directly to any farm to load birds. It is recommended that birds are taken to a central location for loading onto trucks for the Live Bird Market. Vehicles transporting birds should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before returning to the farm. Special attention should be paid to the coops. If you must allow trucks from the LBM onto your premises, do not allow personnel or coops from the live bird markets to enter your poultry house(s) unless those personnel are wearing proper clothing and coops have been cleaned and disinfected.

- Insist that supplies brought to your premises (egg flats, carts, etc.) be new (if disposable) or be washed and disinfected (plastic flats, carts, shelves, or dividers).
- Follow the “all-in/all-out” philosophy of flock management.
- Protect open range or backyard poultry flocks from contact with wild birds and water that may have been contaminated by wild birds.
- Dispose of dead birds safely (incineration, burial, composting, rendering). Never pile dead birds outside of a building or spread in fields.
- If multiple loadouts are required on your farm, try to have all birds off the farm within 3-4 days.
- Report any increased illness or mortality to your company or to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at (717) 772-2852.

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PENNSYLVANIA AVIAN INFLUENZA MONITORED FLOCK PROGRAM
Compliance Agreement**

1. DATE OF APPLICATION: _____

2. FLOCK OWNER INFORMATION:

a. NAME: _____

b. ADDRESS: _____

c. FEDERAL PREMISE ID NUMBER IF AVAILABLE: _____

d. PHONE NUMBER: _____

e. FAX NUMBER: _____

f. EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

3. INFORMATION FOR FARM WHERE POULTRY ARE HOUSED:

a. NAME OF FARM OWNER: _____

b. ADDRESS: _____

c. FEDERAL PREMISE ID NUMBER IF AVAILABLE: _____

d. PHONE NUMBER: _____

e. FAX NUMBER: _____

f. EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

Additional location information for farm (directions/distance from nearest crossroads, etc):

4. FLOCK MANAGER INFORMATION IF DIFFERENT FROM FLOCK OWNER:

a. NAME: _____

b. ADDRESS: _____

c. FEDERAL PREMISE ID NUMBER IF AVAILABLE: _____

d. PHONE NUMBER: _____

e. FAX NUMBER: _____

f. EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

5. BIRD INFORMATION:

SPECIES, TYPE, AND NUMBER OF BIRDS Please list all types and approximate number of birds of each type on the farm (for example – Chickens/broilers – 50): _____

SOURCE FLOCK: _____

6. HOUSING INFORMATION:

NUMBER OF HOUSES/PENS AND CAPACITY OF EACH HOUSE/PEN (for example – one 2,500 bird broiler house):

7. OTHER INFORMATION:

SERVICE PERSON

a. NAME: _____

b. ADDRESS: _____

c. PHONE NUMBER: _____

d. FAX NUMBER: _____

e. EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

INTEGRATOR AND/OR FEED DELIVERED BY (OR FEED PURCHASED FROM)

a. NAME: _____

b. ADDRESS: _____

c. PHONE NUMBER: _____

d. FAX NUMBER: _____

e. EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SAMPLES COLLECTED BY (CPT OR ACCREDITED VETERINARIAN)

a. NAME: _____

b. ADDRESS: _____

c. PHONE NUMBER: _____

d. FAX NUMBER: _____
e. EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

8. SIGNATURE:

I agree to abide by the PA AI Monitored Flock Program standards;

Flock owner signature

This agreement may be sent by fax or mail to the Department at:

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services
ATTN: Poultry Health
2301 N Cameron St
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Phone: 717-772-2852
Fax: 717-787-1868